



# TRICARE Northwest

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## Generals Farmer; Feyk Honored at Fort Lewis Welcoming Ceremony

Bob Rosenburgh, 4th ROTC PAO

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The I Corps and Fort Lewis command recently held a ceremony to welcome two new brigadier generals to the military community. Arriving as the new deputy commanding general of U. S. Army Cadet Command was Brig. Gen. William C. Feyk, accompanied by his wife, Lisa. Also honored at the 4 p.m. ceremony, held in the front of the post headquarters, was Brig. Gen. Kenneth L. Farmer, Jr, the new Lead Agent for the TRICARE Northwest Region, with his wife, Pat and their son, Peter.

Feyk's new assignment will post him at the head-

quarters of 4th Region (ROTC) on Fort Lewis, while Farmer will work from offices at Madigan Army Medical Center. "We're here this afternoon to welcome two great officers and their families to Fort Lewis," said I Corps and Fort Lewis commander Lt. Gen. James T. Hill, "and at the same time recognize the importance of their two significant organizations that simply happen to reside here at Fort Lewis." He said neither of the new generals has arrived



by sheer chance, but were instead selected for their abilities and potential to lead their commands into the future.

"Ken Farmer will, no doubt, making a lasting impact on (this TRICARE) Region." Hill described the wide variety of positive endorse-

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## Madigan Recognized as Level II Trauma Center

Sharon D. Ayala, MAMC PAO

For the last five years, Madigan Army Medical Center has functioned as the only adult trauma center in its region of the state. Since 1998, Madigan has operated as a Level II Trauma Center, meeting all state requirements.

On Aug. 8, after a two-year wait, Madigan received a Certificate of Formal Recognition by the State of Washington Department of Health as a Level II Trauma Center. Congratulations to Madigan for achieving this level of excellence in

trauma care.

Madigan is one of only three U.S. Army hospitals with this designation. The other two hospitals are Brooke Army Medical Center and William Beaumont Army Medical Center.

## Generals Farmer; Feyk Honored at Fort Lewis Welcoming Ceremony Cont'd

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ment she has heard about Farmer, from the Army Surgeon General and many more. "They have all had positive things to say about Ken and we will all benefit from his effort as he builds on the TRICARE region that has already set the standard for the military."

Newly promoted Brig. Gen. Farmer comes to Madigan after having served as commander of the 44th Medical Brigade, the 18th Airborne Corps Surgeon and Director of Health Services at Fort Bragg, N.C. He served before at Fort Lewis from 1979 to 1981. "We fell in love with the area and always hoped we would have a chance to come back to Fort Lewis," Farmer said, "and we are delighted to be back." He noted that the new Madigan hospital is much better than the old one he worked in before. Farmer also addressed the challenges he faces in this new job.

"With the changes in the army being so visible here," he said of

the well-known brigade transformation project, "it is fitting that we are also the major platform for change in military medicine as well. This region was the first to start up TRICARE more than five years ago and it has been a test bed for innovations and initiatives since."

He said he comes to Madigan to pilot a new initiative to completely integrate Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and civilian contract partners in the region. The region, he said was not chosen because it had problems, but rather because it works so well and is ready for expansion. "My new position is to take what has been the existing position of Lead Agent for TRICARE here in the Northwest, but giving some expanded authority and responsibilities." Farmer said the Lead Agent previously was a coordinator for TRICARE issues between the services, with little authority to address many of the key issues. "This pilot program is

going to give me and my staff significantly more authority to pull the region together to optimize the care near our Military Treatment Facilities as well as many people who are out and away from MTFs." Another key difference he noted was that the Lead Agent was previously "triple-hatted" as Madigan commander, Western Medical Region commander and TRICARE Northwest Region Lead Agent. Under the current plan, Farmer will serve as Lead Agent and Western Medical Region Commander. The Madigan commander will go to him for guidance and coordination on TRICARE issues. "I will have TRICARE authority over the Navy and Air Force hospital commanders in the region as well," Farmer added. Farmer said his pledge to all TRICARE clients and providers will be that he will be up front, honest, above board and will tell it like it is.

## Local Hospital Corpsmen Support Joint Mission in Southeast Asia

*By Judith Robertson, PAO, NHB*

A stint with the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting team and Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii, meant seven weeks on foreign soil at 4 thousand foot elevation, hanging 75 feet down a cliff side from a rappel line, in 85 degree weather with 90 percent humidity -- digging dirt.

What kind of work is that for a hospital corpsman? It was not an

assignment. It is strictly a volunteer mission, and Independent Duty Corpsmen from Naval Hospital Bremerton have been lining up to go.

The main mission of the 12-member JTF-FA teams is to augment the CILHI teams who search for, recover, and identify remains of American personnel, and certain allied personnel unaccounted

for from World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War and other conflicts and contingencies.

By volunteering as the medic on Recovery Team 5, Chief Hospital Corpsman Karl Matous, an IDC in the hospital's Emergency Dept., spent seven weeks in a triple canopy jungle several days away from the nearest village in

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## Local Hospital Corpsmen Support Joint Mission in Southeast Asia Cont'd

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Vietnam, near the Laotian border. The JTF-FA field activities to Vietnam and Laos typically take place five or six times a year, sending out six teams at a time to various locations for approximately 30 days at each site. Teams are built from all services and Department of Defense civilian employees. Teams consist of, amongst others, investigators, linguists, a mortuary affairs specialist, an explosive ordnance disposal technician, an aircraft wreckage analyst, an anthropologist, and a medic.

"My mission was to provide primary and emergency medical care primarily to the team, then for Vietnamese workers, then to local villagers under the Medical Civilian Action Program mandate, if necessary," Matous said. But, he explained, "If you aren't involved in your primary job, and I was fortunate there wasn't a lot of medical problems, then you dig dirt."

Digging dirt, for Recovery Team 5, meant carving away a hillside that had been identified as the site of a plane that had gone down in the late 1960's. "We were digging up and sifting through an area that had the potential to contain aircraft debris, possible human remains, flight equipment, life support equipment, such as uniform pieces, first aid kits, personal equipment. Anything we found was transported back to Hawaii where they have DNA capability and dental and medical records. It could take as long as six to 10 months before any type of identification is made, if any. They would have to be 110 percent sure before

they release any information," he said.

Statistics show the teams have been successful. According to information provided on the Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii's website, so far in calendar year 2000, there have been 12 WWII, four Korean War, two Cold War and 38 Vietnam War remains identified. The team brings information, sometimes remains, and/or personal effects, home to the family and friends of those so long missing in action.

If there was any question in Matous' mind about the why he was spending a month of his life hanging from a cliffside in a foreign country, it all became perfectly clear one rainy afternoon.

"We were actually staying in a hotel in Hue, and would get flown back from the site each night. One day it rained hard and we were sent back early. In the hotel lobby we began talking with three retired Marines who were back in the country as tourists," Matous said. "They had been buddies caught up in the siege of Khe Son. They came back to visit the hill that they had dug into when they were locked down by constant gunfire - for 77 days at one time. That siege went on for months. It must have been gruesome. They were being shot at all day. They went out to hill 771 and stayed the night out there. They said they'd never had an opportunity to say goodbye to 'the hill,' a place where lots of their buddies died. They spent an hour just crying. They said thank you, they knew why we were there."

"We look at it (the mission) like we're on this super adventure. You know, rappelling down mountainsides, real Indiana Jones types. Which is cool, but then we met these guys who had been here during the war. It was about three weeks into the mission and we were all getting a little burned out, but speaking with these guys -- it really hit home. We knew what we were there for."

Closure. That's what it is all about for the families of the MIAs. And this is the message Matous is passing along to Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Malcolm Jacobs, the leading petty officer for the Medical Services Directorate at the hospital, and the next in a long line of volunteers who will support the mission.

Jacobs said he's been curious about Vietnam since he wrote a letter in a fifth grade class and received information from the Vietnam Consulate about the country. He also lost a cousin in the war there. "But his body was returned to us," he said.

"Not too many people in my generation have had the opportunity to go to Vietnam. We grew up seeing it on TV. This mission gives me the opportunity to do what we join the Navy for, go to another country, meet other people, and do a good deed. In Judaism it's considered a "mitzeh," (a good deed) to be able to bring closure to someone who's lost children. It helps bring them a sense of well being, a chance for closure."

## McChord's "Crystal Palace" Clinic Set to Open in December

McChord Air Force Base is scheduled to cut the ribbon on its beautiful new outpatient clinic, dubbed "the Crystal Palace" on December 15.

Construction on the project, which is currently about two months ahead of schedule for completion, began at a groundbreaking ceremony on June 2, 1999.

The two-story structure will include an elevator, an improved reception area, bigger waiting rooms, and some improvements such as locker rooms, showers and staff lounges. All told, the new clinic will add 38,341 square feet of space. The \$19.7 Million facility will also include new, state-of-the-art equipment.



### Women's Health Conference

You are invited to attend a Women's Health Conference - "Making the Mind-Body Connection" on October 19<sup>th</sup> at the Naval Station Everett Grand Vista Ballroom located in "The Commons," 1950 Wren Way.

*The conference will kick off with an optional "Fitness for All" session in the Gym for all conference participants. "Fitness for All" will begin at 6:30 a.m. and will include continental breakfast and beverages at no charge.*

"Making the Mind-Body Connection" will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and will include workshops, displays and presentations on the following topics: Stress Management, Nutrition, Heart Disease, Emotional Well Being, Breast Cancer Survival, and Healthy Lifestyle Choices, among others.

The event is free to the public, but space is limited, so you must register for both "Fitness for All" and "Making the Mind-Body Connection" by calling 1-800-554-6600.

### Ladies Night Out



Oct. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2000  
5:30 p.m. -  
8:30 p.m.

Trident Ballroom, Bangor Sub Base

Workshops include: Healthy Women, Healthy Heart; Make No Bones About It; Healthy Breasts; Keeping the Joy: Sexual Health: Things Your Mamma Didn't Tell You

Keynote Presentation: "Taking Care of Yourself" by Gillian Esser, M.D. Open to all military beneficiaries and DoD Civilians